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ABSTRACT

Public school involvement in providing child care services in 14 southern states was investigated. Data were obtained through questionnaires mailed to state superintendents or commissioners of education in each state. In addition, questionnaires were sent to the superintendent in each of the 142 school districts in North Carolina. Findings indicated that of all North Carolina school districts, 11 percent provide before/after school child care services, 11 percent provide full day prekindergartens, and 6.5 percent offer both types of service. Both before/after school services and full day prekindergarten programs relied on funds from a wide range of sources. No district recognized Child Development Associate (CDA) credentials as adequate to meet requirements for any position. Information on public school child care in other southern states was so limited that caution should be exercised in interpreting the data. All states responding were involved in providing child care services of at least one type. Most respondents felt the need for greater involvement in half-day prekindergartens, the one service already in place in most of the states. (Addresses of state departments of education surveyed as well as locations and types of child care services reported in North Carolina are included in the report.) (RH)

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Child Care in the 80's:

A Brief Report on Public School Involvement

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Traditionally child care has been a family function. Due to societal changes many families can no longer carry out this function alone and for them, child care has become a necessity rather than an option. A number of unresolved issues however continue to prevent acceptance and support of child care. One such issue which has generated considerable debate, but little consensus, is the role of the public schools in the provision of child care services.

The purpose of this study was to explore public school involvement in four types of child care services in 14 southern states. The study was descriptive in nature and data was obtained through questionnaires which were mailed to state superintendents or commissioners of education in each state. In addition a more detailed questionnaire was sent to the superintendent in each of the 142 school districts in North Carolina. North Carolina respondents were also asked to identify by name public school child care programs in their districts conceived and implemented at the local level.

Date analysis of 114 questionnaires returned from North Carolina school districts, revealed that 11% provide before/after school child care services, 11% provide full day prekindergartens, and 6.4% offer both types of service. Before/after school care appears to be a relatively new service since most programs had been developed within the past 5 years. In contrast, it appears that full day prekindergartens developed at a more even pace over a longer period of time. At least 93 before/

after school care programs serving approximately 4157 children and 20 full day prekindergarten programs serving an estimated 412 preschool children were identified.

Hours of operation for public school full day prekindergartens coincided for the most part with the school day and the academic school year. The majority of full day prekindergartens identified their program model as child development and described their curriculum in terms of activities designed to develop and enhance readiness skills. Before/after school curriculum activities noted most frequently were arts and crafts, homework and physical education.

Both before/after and full day prekindergarten programs relied on funds from student fees, local taxes, state, private contributions, business and industry, and co-sponsoring agencies. In addition, full day prekindergartens also used federal funds. Public school support for both types of programs was provided primarily through in-kind services such as free use of facility, janitorial, secretarial, food and health services.

The minimum educational requirement noted most frequently for teachers in both types of programs was certification in early childhood or any other area. No district recognized the Child Development Associate (CDA), a competency based credential for child care providers, as adequate to meet requirements for any position. Estimates of salary ranges for child care staff in public school programs did not seem to differ signi-

ficantly from salaries received in other child care settings.

When asked to determine who provided the impetus for the development of public school child care services, school administrators were named in 71.0% of the school districts. Early educational intervention, lack of private child care facilities and concern for quality of existing care were noted most frequently as factors influencing the development of these services.

A few school districts (14.6%) with no child care services had conducted assessments to determine what types of services were lacking in their area. Before/after care was seen as a need by 80% of these school districts, full day prekindergarten by 46.7%. In reporting changes in school population, 55.9% of the districts reporting indicated that their school population was decreasing; 28.8%, static and 15.3% increasing. The majority of school districts (84%) felt that parents would choose public school child care over other available services. It appears that more respondents felt public school involvement should be greater in before/after care than in full day prekindergartens.

Information on public school child care in other southern states was so limited that caution should be exercised in making generalizations based on this data. Several respondents indicated that involvement was primarily at the local level and specific information was not available in the state office.

All states responding were involved in providing child

care services of at least one type. Several questions were included to obtain information concerning how programs are being carried out. Four types of funding were identified by respondents. Student fees, mentioned most frequently, were named along with local taxes, special state funds and federal funds. Other support provided included free use of facility and janitorial services. It did not appear that any single factor influenced the development of child care services in all states reporting.

Respondents were given little opportunity to provide information on curriculum other than a choice of program model. Child development was the model most consistently selected. The public school system in one state had a contractual arrangement with Head Start for child care; another state contracted with private for profit day care centers. The lower socioeconomic status was most representative of the population served by public school child care in 4 states.

When asked for opinions on future public school involvement in child care, most respondents felt the need for greater involvement in half-day prekindergartens, the one service already in place in most states. No state suggested any type of service should be decreased. All respondents answered yes when asked their opinion on whether parents would choose public school over other child care services.

Addresses of State Departments of Education Surveyed

ALABAMA

Superintendent
Department of Education
State Office Building
501 Dexter Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36130

ARKANSAS

Director
Department of Education
Education Building
Capitol Grounds
Little Rock, AR 72201

FLORIDA

Commissioner
Department of Education
New Capitol Building
Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32304

GEORGIA

Superintendent of Schools
Department of Education
242 Old State Office Building
12 Mitchell Street, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30334

KENTUCKY

Superintendent of Public Instruction
Department of Education
Capitol Plaza Tower
Frankfort, KY 40601

LOUISIANA

Superintendent
Department of Education
Education Building
419 North Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

MISSISSIPPI

Superintendent
Department of Education
501 Walter Sillers Building
550 High Street
Jackson, MS 39202

NORTH CAROLINA

Superintendent of Public Instruction
Department of Education
100 W. Edenton Street
Raleigh, NC 27611

OKLAHOMA

Superintendent of Public Instruction
Department of Education
Oliver Hodge Memorial Education Building
2500 N. Lincoln Boulevard
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

SOUTH CAROLINA

Superintendent of Education
Department of Education
1006 Rutledge Building
1429 Senate Street
Columbia, SC 29201

TENNESSEE

Commissioner
Department of Education
Cordell Hall Building
436 6th Avenue, N.
Nashville, TN 37219

TEXAS

Commissioner
Texas Education Agency
201 E. 11th Avenue
Austin, TX 78701

VIRGINIA

Superintendent of Public Instruction
Department of Education
Nineth Street Office Building
9th & Grace Streets
Richmond, VA 23219

WEST VIRGINIA

Superintendent of Schools
Department of Education
B 358 State Office Building 6
1900 Washington Street, E
Charleston, WV 25305

Child Care Services Reported in North Carolina

School districts	Half-day prekindergarten	Child care in alternative/ extended schools	Before and/ or after school care	Full day prekindergarten	Full day prekindergarten for handicapped	Head Start located in public schools
Alexander Co.	-	-	1	-	2	-
Asheville City	-	-	2	1	-	-
Buncombe Co.	-	-	-	2	-	-
Caldwell Co.	-	-	-	2	-	-
Catawba Co.	-	-	-	-	1	--
Clinton City	-	-	1	-	-	-
Durham Co.	-	-	11	1	-	-
Elkin City	-	1	-	-	-	-
Fayetteville City	-	-	2	-	-	-
Forsyth Co.	1	-	2	1	-	-
Gates Co.	-	-	-	-	-	2
Goldsboro City	-	-	1	-	1	-
Graham Co.	1	-	-	-	-	-
Granville Co.	-	-	3	-	-	-
Greensboro City	-	1	-	-	-	-
Greenville City	-	1	1	-	-	-
Halifax Co.	2	-	-	-	-	-
Henderson Co.	-	-	-	1	-	-
Hickory City	-	-	1	1	-	-
High Point City	-	-	2	1	-	-
Iredell Co.	-	-	10	-	-	-
Kings Mt. City	-	-	-	-	-	2
Lee Co.	1	-	1	-	-	-
Lenoir Co.	-	-	-	3	-	-

Child Care Services Reported in North Carolina (continued)

School districts	Half-day prekindergarten	Child care in alternative/ extended schools	Before and/ or after school care	Full day prekindergarten	Full day prekindergarten for handicapped	Head Start located in public schools
Lexington City	-	-	-	-	1	-
Madison Co.	-	-	-	1	-	-
Moore Co.	2	-	-	-	-	-
Nash Co.	1	-	-	-	-	-
Orange Co.	-	-	2	-	-	-
Pitt Co.	-	-	1	-	-	-
Polk Co.	-	-	-	1	-	-
Red Springs City	-	-	1	-	-	-
Rocky Mt. City	-	2	2	-	-	-
Salisbury City	-	-	2	-	-	-
Shelby City	-	-	-	2	-	-
Statesville City	-	-	4	-	-	-
Surry Co.	-	-	-	-	1	-
Transylvania Co.	-	-	3	-	-	-
Tryon City	-	-	-	1	-	-
Wake Co.	-	-	40	1	-	-
Washington Co.	-	-	-	1	-	1
Wilson Co.	-	-	-	1	-	-
Total	8	5	93	21	6	5

Note: Of 142 school districts in North Carolina 40 reported some child care, 71 reported no child care, and 31 failed to respond.

Public School Child Care Programs
Reported in North Carolina

Alternative/Extended School Child Care

Elkin City
  Elkin Primary
Greensboro City
  Gillespie Education Center
Greenville City
  Fullilove Community School
Rocky Mount City*
  Englewood School
  Johnson School

Before/After School Care

Alexander County*
  Bethlehem
Asheville City*
  Aycock Elementary
  Randolph Elementary
Clinton City
  College Street
Durham County*
  Bethesda
  Eno Valley
  Glenn
  Hillandale
  Holt
  Hope Valley
  Little River
  Lowes Grove
  Merrick-Moore
  Oak Grove
  Pearstown
Fayetteville City
  Dorothy Spainhour
  Edgewood Middle
Forsyth County*
  Latham Elementary
  Moore Elementary
Goldsboro City*
  Edgewood Community Developmental
Granville County
  Butner-Stem Elementary
  Creedmoore Elementary
  West Oxford Elementary
Hickory City*
  Jenkins Elementary
High Point City*
  Parkview
  Shadybrook
Iredell County
  Amity
  Celeste
  Central
  Cool Spring
Iredell County (cont.)
  Ebenezer
  Monticello
  Mt. Mourne
  Sharon
  Shepherd
  Wayside
Lee County*
  Floyd L. Knight/The Children's Center
Orange County
  Cameron Park
  Grady A. Brown
Pitt County
  Ayden Elementary
Red Springs City
  Peterson Elementary
Rocky Mount City*
  Englewood
  Johnson
Salisbury City
  Isenberg Primary
  Overton Primary
Statesville City
  A.D. Rutherford
  N.B. Mills
  Northview
  Pressly
Transylvania County
  Brevard Elementary
  Rosman Elementary
  Straus Elementary
Wake County*
  Combs Elementary
  Hunter Elementary
  Joyner Elementary
  Olds Elementary
  (36 other elementary schools reported but not named)

*School districts providing more than 1 type of child care service.

Full Day Prekindergarten for Handicapped

Alexander County*
  Alexander Central
  Central Jr.
Catawba County
  Conover
Goldsboro City*
  Edgewood Community Developmental
Lexington City
  Developmental Center
Surry County
  Dobson Developmental

Full Day Prekindergarten Programs

Asheville City*
  Asheville High
Buncombe County
  A.C. Reynolds High
  Clyde A. Erwin High
Caldwell County
  Hibriten High
  South Caldwell High
Durham County*
  Lakewood
Forsyth County*
  Career Center
Henderson County
  West Henderson High
Hickory City*
  Hickory High
High Point*
  Oak View
Lenoir County
  Contentnea
  La Grange
  Southwood
Madison County
  Madison High
Polk County
  Polk Central High
Shelby City
  Marion
  Graham
Tryon City
  Tryon Elementary
Wake County*
  Athens Drive High
Washington County
  Washington Street
Wilson County
  Hunt High

Half-day Prekindergarten Programs

Forsyth County*
  Optional Education
Graham County
  Robbinsville High
Halifax County
  Northwest High
  Southeast Halifax
Lee County*
  Floyd L. Knight/The Children's Center
Moore County
  North Moore High
  Union Pines High
Nash County
  Northern Nash

Head Start Located in Public Schools

Gates County
  Buckland
  Sunbury
Kings Mt. City
  (2 schools reported but not named)
Washington County*
  Roper Elementary